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U.S. Bureau of Home Economics

Root Vegetables

in
**LOW
COST
MEALS**

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

JUST CALL THEM ROOTS

Greens may come . . . greens may go. But root vegetables stay in season the year round. Strictly speaking, not all vegetables that grow underground are roots. White potatoes are tubers. Onions are bulbs. But for cooking purposes we'll call them all roots.

Crimson beets . . . orange carrots . . . turnips, white, yellow, purple-topped . . . cream-colored parsnips . . . green spring onions, dry winter onions, brown, red, and silver skinned. Besides this near-rainbow of colors, and flavors mild and tangy, these vegetables from the earth bring vitamins, minerals, starches, and sugars to help supply the body's needs.

To Serve Six

Recipes in this leaflet are for 6 servings, and take about 2 pounds of the vegetables raw. Most root vegetables keep best in a cool, moist place. Winter onions, the exception, keep best where it is cool and dry.

Root vegetables may be "of the earth earthy." So scrub them well before cooking.

When the Kettle Boils

▶ Start root vegetables in boiling salted water . . . about 1 teaspoon of salt to a quart of water.

▶ Young, tender roots need only enough water to prevent them from sticking to the pan. For older roots, have enough boiling water to cover.

▶ To keep the flavor of onions and turnips mild, leave the kettle uncovered. To speed the cooking of others, put on the lid.

▶ Boil root vegetables whole in their skin unless too strong or tough. Nature grew this jacket to hold in food value and flavor. If peel you must, make the peelings thin, or scrape no more than skin deep.

▶ To keep beets from losing their bright red, leave on the long taproot and an inch or two of stems. A quick dip into cold water loosens the jacket on a cooked beet so it slips off like a glove.

▶ Carrots, turnips, onions, often cook quicker if sliced or diced. Serve in their own juice or, if too much, use in soup, sauce, or gravy to make the most of minerals, vitamins, and flavor.

Time-Table for Boiling

- Young beets: 30-45 minutes. Older beets: 60-90.
- Young carrots: 15-20 minutes. Older carrots: 20-25
- Onions: 30-40 minutes.
- Parsnips: 20-30 minutes.
- Rutabagas: 20-30 minutes. Turnips: 15-20.

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Season to Taste

Easiest way to season a plain-cooked hot vegetable is to add meat drippings or melted fat and salt and pepper to taste, just before ready to serve.

Or some like a little milk added at the last minute to cooked carrots, turnips, or onions.

To give more "lift," now and then, drop in a little chopped onion, or green onion tops, or a green pepper chopped if peppers happen to be plentiful.

Some cooks have fun and add savor to their food by growing a pot of parsley or chives on the sunny kitchen window sill or in a spot of ground by the back porch.

Thrifty cooks save the crusts and scraps of bread to break into crumbs to mix with meat drippings and top a baked dish, or serve as a thickener for the very juicy vegetables.

A little vinegar or a squeeze or two of lemon juice mixed with the fat adds a pleasantly sour note to seasoning for boiled carrots, beets, or turnips.

Whatever the seasoning, be sure to serve hot vegetables hot. That's another way to bring out their best.

Plan the Oven's Work

It's thrifty to *bake* vegetables when you heat the oven for other cooking.

Potatoes are the star bakers. But carrots are good baked around meat . . . or sliced into a baking dish with a little water, covered, and baked in a moderate oven until tender.

Scalloping gives a crusty top to plain boiled vegetables, and is a smart way to combine small amounts of leftovers into a fine dish for all.

To 3 cups of cooked vegetable, allow $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups of white sauce, and 1 cup of bread crumbs blended with a little fat. Place layers of the vegetable and sauce in a baking dish. Cover with the crumbs and bake in a moderate oven until brown and bubbling.

Be "Saucy" Now and Then

White sauce blends well with plain-cooked onions, carrots, parsnips, or turnips. For medium-thick sauce, blend 3 tablespoons of flour with 3 tablespoons of fat. Add $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups of milk (fresh, or evaporated, or dried mixed with water). Cook 5 minutes and stir constantly to make the sauce smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper. This is enough sauce to mix with 3 cups of cooked vegetables to serve 6 persons.

Invent your own.—To the white sauce and cooked vegetable add leftover bits of meat, or fish, or hard-cooked egg, or grated cheese, and serve piping hot.

Baby Beets or Turnips With Their Greens

Beet or turnip greens are full of vitamins. Cook baby beets or tiny turnips with their greens in water until tender (15 or 20 minutes), drain, and chop them together. Season with bacon or other fat, and salt and pepper to taste.

Harvard Beets

1 tablespoon cornstarch, or	1/2 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons flour	1/2 cup vinegar
1/2 cup sugar	2 tablespoons fat
3 cups cooked beets, sliced	

Mix the cornstarch or flour, sugar, and salt. Add the vinegar and boil 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Add the fat and the beets, and let stand until the sauce becomes red. Reheat if necessary. The acid of the vinegar brings out the bright red color.

Beet Soup

Here's a quick way to make beet soup something like Russian borsch, but using leftovers:

Chop cooked beets, very fine, and add to beef broth, along with chopped cooked onion, carrot, or cabbage. Season with herbs (dried or fresh) and serve very hot. Some like beet soup served with a little sour cream.

Pickled Beets

Combine 1/2 cup of water and 1/2 cup of vinegar, 1/2 teaspoon salt, a dash of pepper and 1 tablespoon of sugar. Pour this over 3 cups of sliced hot beets. Serve hot or cold. Use this same liquor if desired to pickle hard-cooked eggs.

Carrots Fried or With Apples or Onions

Wash and scrape medium-sized carrots and cut lengthwise into thin slices. Slice apples in rings with the skins on. Place the carrots in a frying pan with a little melted fat or bacon drippings, cover tightly, and cook until almost tender. Add the apples, sprinkle with salt and sugar, and brown well.

Or, fry carrots and sliced onions together.

Carrots or Turnips O'Brien

Cook turnips until tender. Chop, and season with salt and pepper. Add chopped green or sweet red pepper. Melt 2 tablespoons of fat in a frying pan, and spread a thin even layer of the turnip in the pan. Heat over a low flame and serve hot.

Panned Carrots

Wash, scrape, and slice carrots thin. Melt 3 tablespoons of fat in a heavy skillet and add 3 cups of sliced carrots. Cover and cook over a low fire until tender. Season with salt and pepper, or fry bacon and salt pork first and cook the carrots in the drippings.

Carrot Scallop

1 egg	3 cups raw carrots, cut fine
1 cup milk	1 tablespoon melted fat
Salt and pepper to taste	

Beat the egg slightly. Add the milk, carrots, fat, and salt and pepper. Pour into a greased baking dish. Bake in a moderate oven until set.

Carrot Pudding

1 cup chopped raw carrots	2 cups raisins, ground
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup honey, sirup, or molasses,	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon soda
or	1 cup flour
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar and 2 table- spoons water	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup ground suet
	1 orange or lemon, juice and rind

Mix together well and fill greased cans two-thirds full. Use any straight-sided can with holes punched in the top. Steam for $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Serve with a sauce, if desired.

Raw Carrot Sandwich Filling

Grate raw carrot and use alone, or with chopped peanuts or raisins, mixed with table fat.

Onion Soup

Cook 2 cups finely chopped onions in 2 tablespoons fat until lightly brown. Sprinkle with 3 tablespoons of flour and stir. Add $1\frac{1}{2}$ quarts hot meat broth, made by cooking a soup bone in water, and stir until smooth. Season with salt and pepper and simmer until the onions are tender and flavor well blended. Serve in bowls with a slice of toast in each. If you have dry cheese on hand, grate a little over the toast.

Spring Onions on Toast

If you have an abundance of spring onions, allow 6 or 7 finger-sized ones to each serving. Cook, green tops and all, until tender in lightly salted boiling water, uncovered. This takes only about 20 minutes if onions are young and fresh. When tender, drain. Salt if needed, season with melted fat, and if desired serve on toast.

Scalloped Onions and Peanuts

Measure 3 cups of cooked onions, 1 cup of ground roasted peanuts, 1 cup of thin white sauce, 1 cup of bread crumbs blended with a little melted fat. In a baking dish make layers consisting of onions, peanuts, and sauce. Cover the top with bread crumbs. Bake in a moderate oven until the crumbs are golden brown.

Stewed Onions and Tomatoes

Combine sliced onions with canned tomatoes for stewing or scalloping. Thicken with a little flour or stale bread toasted and broken into small pieces.

Quick Turnip or Carrot Soup

Cook 2 tablespoons of finely chopped onion in 2 tablespoons of fat for a few minutes. Stir in 2 tablespoons of flour. Add 1 quart of heated milk and 1 cup of grated, ground, or finely chopped raw turnips or carrots. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir well and cook until tender, about 10 minutes.

Mashed Potatoes and Rutabagas

Cook equal portions of potato and rutabaga together. Drain. Mash and season with salt and pepper. Serve hot.

Browned Parsnips

To get rid of the woody core, boil the parsnips whole, split lengthwise, and strip out the tough center. Dip the halves in flour and fry in fat until they are golden brown. Or, mash and season the parsnips to make little cakes, and fry them.

Scalloped Parsnips

Arrange cooked parsnips, split lengthwise, in a shallow baking dish, pour over them thin white sauce, sprinkle with bread crumbs, and bake until the sauce bubbles and the crumbs are brown.

Roots and Roast

Pare and place root vegetables around a pot roast when the meat is about half done. Make it any combination you like—onions, potatoes, turnips, carrots, whole or in halves. Cook under a lid until the vegetables are almost tender, then baste with the meat broth, and let brown lightly. Serve on a hot platter with vegetables circling the meat.

MIX YOUR VEGETABLES

Vegetable Soup

Simmer a soup bone in water. To each quart of this meat broth allow:

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| 1 medium-sized onion | 1 small green pepper |
| 2 small carrots | 2 stalks celery and leaves |
| 1 turnip | 1 cup tomato juice and pulp |
| 1 medium-sized potato | Salt and pepper |

Cut all the vegetables about the same size and shape. Cook them in the salted meat stock until they are tender but not broken. Season well and serve hot.

Vegetable Chowder

Even more nourishing than the vegetable soup is this chowder made with the same vegetables, but using milk instead of meat broth. Brown the onion first in meat drippings. Then add the cut-up vegetables and 2 cups of boiling water. Cook until the vegetables are tender. Add 3 cups of hot milk, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of dry bread crumbs, and salt and pepper to taste. Serve hot.

Vegetable Stew or Pie

Use half as much meat broth and the same quantity of vegetables as called for in the vegetable soup recipe. Thicken with a tablespoon of flour mixed with cold water, and you have a delicious vegetable stew to serve as such.

Or, put the vegetable stew into a baking dish, cover with rounds of biscuit dough or with mashed potatoes, and bake in a hot oven.

Some Raw

For a relish to eat raw with salt, like celery, cut young turnips and carrots in thin sticks and serve with or without spring onions. Or put into a lunch box wrapped in paper to keep crisp.

For a salad to mix with dressing and serve on crisp greens, here are a few suggestions. Try others keyed to what you have on hand.

- Shredded raw carrots with sliced cabbage, diced apple, or raisins.
- Diced cooked beets with sliced hard-cooked eggs.
- Onion rings with shredded cabbage.
- Shredded carrots and cottage cheese balls.
- Diced raw rutabaga, chopped green pepper, and cold cooked potato.

GOOD MEALS WITH ROOT VEGETABLES

Root vegetables make a year-round contribution to a good, healthful diet. Always in season, in one form or another, they are grown by farmers in all parts of the country. While supplies are usually abundant, many American families cannot afford to buy all of these vegetables they need and want. To enable these families to use more of these important food products and thereby build a wider market for growers, the Agricultural Marketing Administration, when supplies have been large, has included root vegetables on the list of foods obtainable with free blue stamps under the Food Stamp Program. Surplus root vegetables have also been bought by the AMA from time to time for direct distribution by State welfare agencies to families receiving public aid and for use in school lunches for children.

While the primary purpose of this leaflet is to assist in a more effective use of root vegetables by low-income families, the information on preparing these vegetables economically in a variety of ways will be useful to any consumer.

Prepared by

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